



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONNECTICUT, INC.®

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## **CGA Government Administration and Elections Committee**

February 29, 2016 Public Hearing

HB5391 AN ACT CONCERNING THE HANDLING OF VOTER AFFIDAVITS

Comments submitted by Yvonne D. Senturia, Election Laws Specialist

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The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a nonpartisan, statewide organization committed to effective public policy, the active involvement of citizens in their government and improving the electoral process.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on HB5391 *An Act Concerning The Handling of Voter Affidavits*. The League opposes this bill.

The proposed changes alter the voter ID scheme such that anyone who cannot show ID but instead signs an affidavit is given a provisional ballot, rather than a regular ballot. Provisional ballots are treated differently than regular ballots, only counted at a later date. There are additional avenues of disenfranchisement with provisional ballots:

Provisional ballots are available only in elections with federal offices on the ballot.

If a provisional ballot is later counted, only federal offices would be counted.

There are no provisional ballots available for municipal elections with no federal offices on the ballot.

The proposed changes in the treatment of voter affidavits risk disenfranchisement of registered voters. We would urge the Committee to continue with the present system for handling voter affidavits.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this bill.